

1650
A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT
ST. LAWRENCE'S CHURCH,
On THURSDAY, *April 27, 1775,*

BEFORE

His Royal Highness WILLIAM Duke of
GLOUCESTER,

P R E S I D E N T,

AND THE

G O V E R N O R S

OF THE

LONDON-HOSPITAL,

AT

M I L E - E N D,

FOR THE

RELIEF of all Sick and Diseased Persons, especially
MANUFACTURERS, and SEAMEN in MERCHANT-
SERVICE, &c.

By the Rev. MATTHEW AUDLEY,
CHAPLAIN to the said HOSPITAL.

Published at the Request of the PRESIDENT and GOVERNORS.

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Printed by H. S. WOODFALL, in *Pater-Noster-Row.*
M.DCC.LXXV.

ST. F. R. M. O. N.

ST. LAWRENCE CHURCH

On Thursday, April 17, 1874

His Royal Highness William Duke of

Westminster



THE ROYAL

AND THE

GOVERNORS

OF THE

LONDON-HOSPITAL

AT

M. A. E. W. D.

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Relief of all Sick and Distressed Persons, especially
Manufacturers, and Seamen in Distress
Suffering, &c.

By the Rev. MATTHEW AUDLEY
CHAPELAIN to the said Hospital

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MDCCCLXXV

2 COR. IX. 12.

The administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the Saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.

THE words here rendered *administration* and *service* are terms manifestly borrowed from the office of the priests under the Mosaic æconomy: the one signifying, the duty to be performed by them in the temple; the other, their performing it. The Apostle therefore, in this, as well as in several other places, considers charity under the notion of a sacrifice. Thus, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he directs his converts *to do good and to communicate; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.* And the use he makes of this allusion to the temple-service, is, in this and the foregoing chapter, to exhort the Corinthians to a liberal contribution for the support of the poor Christians in Judæa; who, it should seem were at this time, either

under some great calamity, or under the apprehensions and expectation of it.

ST. PAUL, who was in a peculiar manner the apostle of the Gentiles, could not but see how much it concerned him, that they should, upon this occasion, shew their zeal for the religion they were converted to, by their affection for their distressed brethren ; and the more so, because, as we may conjecture from what he says in Gal. ii. 10. he had engaged and passed his word for them, that they should not be backward in so good a work.

To this purpose we may see, that he makes use of the whole art of persuasion, of which he was master in perfection. His several arguments, though excellent in their kind, must be omitted, as too many and too long to be insisted upon on this present occasion. One thing only must be observed, which is the admirable turn he gives his whole discourse : as if he was informing them of the good disposition and readiness of *others*, as a thing which he hoped would be exceedingly agreeable to them, rather than directly applying himself to convince them of the reasonableness and necessity of such a contribution on *their own* parts. This would have betrayed a too open distrust of them ; and therefore, as if he meant only to impart his joy for the

the benevolent temper he found among the Macedonians, and to give the Corinthians occasion to rejoice with him, he adds, *for as to the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write unto you. For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago.*

IN which words, though he seems to express a great confidence in them, yet we may not improbably conclude, he had some suspicion, that their forwardness began to abate. He knew well, that the hasty zeal of new converts, when their affections were warmed by a moving discourse, was ready to undertake great matters, which, when they were suffered to cool by time, they would not so easily be brought to perform. This being the case, the apostle had a nice affair to manage: on the one hand, to press them effectually to a liberal contribution, and yet, at the same time, to shew no doubt or distrust of their ready compliance. How admirably he has performed this task, they who attentively consider what he says, will doubtless take a pleasure in discovering.

THE text is a part of one of those many arguments which the apostle lays before the Corinthians upon this occasion. It is drawn from the nature of charitable actions, which do not,
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like other expences, lessen our stock, but by a particular blessing of providence, greatly tend to the encrease of it. This he illustrates in this chapter by an elegant comparison of what is bestowed in this way to *seed sown* in the ground ; which God, who *ministereth* that very *seed to the sower*, when he seeth it bestowed according to his will, can and usually does multiply to such a degree, that the charitable giver has not only sufficient to answer the common necessities of life, not only bread to eat, but *is enriched in every thing to all bountifulness* : that is, has over and above wherewith to enjoy the comforts of life himself, and to impart his liberality to others : contrary to the opinion of worldly-minded men, who are apt to think, that doing a generous action, or giving bountifully to the necessitous, is depriving themselves of the means of living, and bringing want and poverty to their own doors, though *their garners are so full and plenteous with all manner of store*, that they are casting about in their minds, *to pull down their barns and build greater*.

WHAT follows in the text—That this bountifulness causeth *thanksgivings to God*, is either a reason given by the apostle, why God's providence is so much concerned to interest itself in this matter ; or to shew the Corinthians what grounds

grounds they had to hope, that God not only *could*, but *would* give a blessing to their charity; namely, because the charity of men tends to promote the glory of God—to implant just and right notions in mankind, of the mercy and goodness, and bounty of their great Creator; and therefore he would never let such men want the means of advancing his glory, which they and all christians profess to have regard to.

NATURAL reason, as well as revelation, teaches us, that *every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights*; and will inform us, that all the powers and faculties of our minds and bodies, the endowments of nature and advantages of riches, whatever mankind has, by which one man can be assisting and serviceable to another, is the free gift and bounty of God. That men are of a social, conversible, not of a wild, savage disposition; that they have a sense and feeling of each others misfortunes, and a desire of helping and lessening their afflictions; that they find a pleasure and satisfaction, when all about them are happy and contented is to be acknowledged as a distinguishing mark of divine favour to mankind, and ought to be *abundant by many thanksgivings unto God*, in providing so amply for the security and happiness of life, by the mutual intercourse
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of good offices; and the help and assistance which the author of our nature has secured, that the one shall receive from the other.

STILL further. That there are so frequent instances of great and noble and beneficent spirits who seem wholly intent upon the good of others, and spend more thought and pains to serve the poor and distressed, than others usually do in the pursuit of their own private advantages: who are not content with the common and ordinary portions of relief, but are daily spent, and spending themselves in laying foundations, and endowing houses of mercy for the reception, and as far as possible, for the removal of every malady to which human nature is subject, is still the effect of the divine bounty and goodness: and as such ought, at all times, with the greatest gratitude, to be acknowledged. And however, upon a slight view we may be apt to rest in second causes, and not see how far God's hand is concerned in these matters, yet the voice of nature directs the tongues of men, even of *hypocrites*, to thank God and their benefactors for the relief afforded them. And if our present circumstances were altered, and our own *bowels refreshed*, as the apostle speaks in another case, by the charity and benificence of our fellow-servants, we did not, besides having a grateful sense of our obligation

obligation to them, acknowledge God also as the author, and first cause of our present comfort, we might justly be thought guilty of the most brutish insensibility and misuse of our reason.

Works of charity therefore are due, not only as a supply for the temporal wants of the poor, but also as they may be instrumental to advance and promote religion in the hearts and consciences of men, being *abundant by many thanksgivings unto God.*

THAT such charitable assistance is to be shewn to the poor, we have not only the advice and direction of the apostles of Jesus Christ, but the example and command of our great Lord and Master himself. This was the constant business of his life, which he executed with indefatigable diligence. He omitted no opportunity of doing good either to the souls or bodies of men: to their souls, by his most excellent instructions, reproofs, exhortations and advice: to their bodies, by *healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease; making the lame to walk, the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.* And these two methods of doing good were properly joined together, serving to add a value to each other. The miraculous cures which he wrought, tended to dispose the minds of those who received the benefit of

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them, to listen the more attentively to the discourses of their gracious benefactor. And the instructions which accompanied those cures, made them the more valuable, since they were thereby taught to make a good use of those faculties and abilities, which they received in so extraordinary a manner. And can there be wanting any arguments? Or rather, is it not the greatest happiness and honour, which wealth and riches can procure, to be able to imitate so great a pattern of mercy, in endeavouring to promote the welfare of their poorer brethren, both in the present and in a future state?

It is not indeed in the power of any man to imitate our blessed Lord in doing good, by working miracles in their behalf and for their relief; to attempt which, would be a piece of unwarrantable presumption; yet it is manifest from what has been said, that many good offices may be done to our fellow-creatures, which lie within the compass of our own finite power. To make use of *supernatural* means was in the power of the great Saviour of the world; the use of *natural* means is in the power of men, to relieve or alleviate the distresses of men like themselves. Our Lord had all nature at his command, and could in an instant cleanse the lepers, and cure the paralytic. If He spake the word,

word, *I will*, immediately in the one case the leprosy was cleansed; and in the other, *the lame* could take up his bed and walk. And though the rich man cannot, as he did, cure diseases with a word, he may, if he has but will, give medicine to heal their sickness, and can supply the afflicted with such necessaries as may contribute much, either to their recovery, or to their comfort and support.

THERE is, God knows, a great deal of wretchedness in the world, more than can easily be thought of, or even imagined by those who fall not in the way to see and observe it. The sensual and voluptuous are so taken up with providing for their luxury and pleasures, or so wrapped up in a sense of their own independence, that they have neither an ear to hear the cry, nor a hand to relieve the wants of a begging Lazarus at their gates. The men of business are so immersed with the cares and concerns of this life, that they have no leisure to attend to the afflictions, that are to be found among their brethren, that are in the world.

BUT could we persuade either or both these sorts of men to make to themselves a leisure hour, and to walk through our Hospitals; and there take a view of the different objects of distress, and the various scenes of misery within

those walls, it would be instead of a thousand arguments, to awaken compassion and benevolence. Let them but attend to the silent tear of the languishing sick, or hearken to the louder groans of the more acute-distempered, and they must divest themselves of humanity, if they did not find as much relief to their minds, by *weeping with them that weep*, as ever they have heretofore found, by *rejoicing with them that do rejoice*. Nor can we suppose, while such pitiable objects are before their eyes, but that every beholder would wish it in his power, and be glad to exert that power, in contributing to the relief of such congregated misery. Even pride, however disdainful of others, would change its nature: and the vain rich man, instead of valuing himself on the elegance of his dress and equipage, *his being clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day*, would reap more satisfaction and real pleasure in acts of charity to the poor; and make it matter of glory to be found imitating his blessed Saviour, that best friend to mankind, *who went about, doing good*.

THERE are too many, indeed, who seem solicitous to avoid such scenes of distress, and to keep as much as possible out of the way of them; for fear, as we may imagine, of being
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put in mind of what despicable materials themselves are made of, and how soon the richest and strongest of men may be reduced to the utmost misery, when God with his rebukes doth correct men for their iniquity, and chase their beauty to consume away like a moth. But if men would in a serious hour reflect that, however strong and robust they are at present, their strength is not the strength of stones, nor is their flesh brass, they might be brought to remember those that suffer affliction, as themselves liable to the like affliction, and with cheerfulness contribute such charitable relief to distressed objects, as themselves would wish to receive if under the same distress.

For charity is, as you have seen, the very standard of christianity, the badge by which the disciples of Jesus Christ were to be distinguished from the whole world besides. Hence arose that surprizing spirit of charity, that in the very infancy of the church, reigned through the whole multitude of believers, so that no one thought himself proprietor of his own, but sold and divided what he had in common. For as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles feet: and distribution was made to every man, according as

he

be had need. From the same spirit, St. Paul, as soon as he had founded churches in the Gentile world, introduced the custom of raising contributions : we learn from the apostolical constitutions weekly contributions, for the poor saints. By the examples of Macedonia, he stirreth up his converts at Rome, and spiriteth up them of Achaia, by the example of Galatia. And as soon as christianity had received a civil establishment, we learn, that the same spirit of benevolence raised various buildings for different charitable uses ; some for the maintaining, cloathing and educating the orphan ; others for the entertainment and refreshment of the way-faring man and weary traveller ; and houses erected for the cure and support of the sick and diseased poor. Asylums unknown, I believe, till set on foot by christians ; and though they may have been imitated since, by nations who have not embraced the religion of Jesus, yet owing their foundations chiefly, if not entirely, to christian practice.

FROM which considerations, give me leave to call your attention to the excellent charity we are now assembled together to recommend and support ; a charitable institution, which hath hitherto received the greatest countenance and protection from all degrees of men, patronized, encouraged

encouraged and largely contributed to by many of the first personages and families in the kingdom, and which, we trust, will always deserve a continuance of their generous assistance and princely beneficence.

BUT when we consider who the persons are, for whose more immediate relief this Hospital was founded, *the manufacturer and sailor in the merchant's service, and their wives and families*, though to the exclusion of none, whose distempers and casualties require assistance, and whose circumstances entitle them to it, we must naturally expect, and it has been and always will be the case, that its chief and main support must arise from the wealth and riches, and liberality of this great commercial city. The flourishing condition of this metropolis depends upon the industry and labour of the poor mechanic and the hardy sailor. These are the necessary instruments of trade, without whose hands all business must be at a stand, and your ships remain useless in harbour. And yet few, very few of these useful people have it in their power, from their scanty wages and small earnings, to lay up in store against the day of calamity, or to make provision for the time of sickness. To whom therefore must they look for relief, when disease and casualties overtake them, but to those
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in whose service they have been employed, and perhaps, by their diligence in that service, have contracted those distempers, or met with those accidents which now prevent them from their daily labour? In such times, they have not only a right to ask and solicit, not barely an ordinary claim to the relief of the rich and great, but a kind of equitable demand upon *them*, whose wealth and greatness arose from *their* strength and industry.

BUT so much has been said in favour of this Hospital, by the most eminent prelates of this church and kingdom, and its utility so thoroughly explained by them, and now so well understood by all, that it would be impertinent in *me* to enlarge further, or endeavour to excite your contributions by arguments, which have been already so strongly enforced by preachers of so great learning and abilities. It is the misfortune of the poor, that they are deprived of the assistance of a very great and able * advocate of that order this day; as I am too sensible of my own inability to appear upon so sudden an emergency to perform this duty in a way answerable to the expectation of those who hear me, or to

* The Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells had engaged to preach, but was prevented by illness.

my own wishes and inclination. I shall not therefore attempt to proceed further in this method, but rather beg you and entreat you, from the great success this excellent charity has already met with, *not to be weary in well-doing*; to consider what *supplies* the administration of *this service* hath already given to the poor, and how by your liberality, it may be made to *abound* still more and more, *by many thanksgivings unto God.*

THIS charity had its beginning about five and thirty years ago, by a contribution of a few individuals: and of what service it has been to the community appears by the numbers; more than TWO HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND, who have been relieved, from its commencement to the present time. The fruit of many years, it is true; but yet, a number that must fill the heart of every compassionate man with a pleasing astonishment; and cause him to give praise to that God, who *fashioneth the hearts of men, and turneth them whithersoever he will*, for inclining and directing them to so useful a design, so commendable a work.

From this foundation thus raised by a few, this charity has increased to the state in which we now see it, and rejoice at. The building is now totally completed, as to its outward form

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according to the original plan : and one of the wings is furnished and made use of for the reception of patients. And as each of the wards in this new addition was nearly as large as any in the centre, it was thought, from general calculation, there would be room enough for the admission of as many patients, as would ordinarily attend and apply for relief. But when the smaller rooms in the house, which were only to be made use of till the wings could be raised, were laid aside ; and the larger wards, too closely filled before, thinned of their numbers, a work highly useful for the more speedy restoration of health, no more than twenty-eight beds could be added to the former.

THE reducing the numbers in the several apartments seems to have had its desired effect ; and the expectation of those worthy Governors, who gave their attention to this salutary scheme, and promoted the most part of it at their own private expence, has been greatly answered. The air, which before became putrid through the breath of so many, labouring under various diseases, crowded together in the same room, is now rendered wholesome and pure ; as much, or more so, I believe, than is to be found in the sick chambers of the poor, in their own private habitations. Great praise, many thanks are due

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to *them* for their unwearied attendance upon this most useful improvement.

BUT still the great wish remains to be accomplished ; the receiving *all* who apply, whose cases require assistance. And there is but little room to expect that the number of supplicants will decrease, whilst the gain arising from their daily labour is but very little, if at all advanced, and the price of provision almost double to what it was a few years since.

It is a melancholy circumstance for an humane mind to think, that any wretched fellow-creature, almost sinking under the weight of his distemper, should be sent back, and pinched, perhaps, with extreme poverty, be obliged to wait for a future day of admission, when the carcase of the other wing is raised, and might soon be made ready and useful. It is a known observation, that to prevent the growth of evil, it should be stopt in the beginning : and the truth of this aphorism never more fully appears, than in the practice of physic. A disease may be easily removed by proper medicines, skilfully given, at its first appearance, which, if suffered to gain strength by the delay of a few days, may baffle the art of the most able physician.

It was remarked by * a learned Prelate, now with God, in his sermon preached before the Governors of this charity, as a matter of some admiration, that “ a charitable building, called “ THE LONDON HOSPITAL, close to your “ own gates, and a receptacle for your own “ poor, should be begun, and left unfinished “ and incomplete.” The answer, indeed, was then and is still too obvious. It is not owing to the will that it remains so, but to the want of a sufficient fund, that you are unable to perform all that could be wished. Great additions, have however, been made since that time; and great services have been rendered to the poor, and to the publick, as the case even now stands. Near eleven thousand poor objects have been relieved by your bounty within the last year: of which number, two thousand and sixty were admitted into the Hospital. And, though it could not be expected, though the most sanguine expectation could not believe, that all of these should recover of their several complaints, and be *healed of all their sores*; yet of those who died, many of them were received under such terrible casualties and accidents, or whose diseases were arrived to such an height, and some in the last stages of their distempers,

* The Lord Bishop of Landaff (Dr. Ewer) in 1766.

that there could be but little hopes of a cure, even at their admission ; and seventeen hundred and more were cured, and rendered serviceable again to the community, and a comfort and support to their families. Thus far, therefore, you have reason to be glad at the success of your *work, which hath proceeded of love* ; and there is room for rejoicing, that God hath given you such success ; but cannot, considering the maxims of worldly prudence, venture to encrease your expences beyond the bounds of what you may reasonably expect to be made good.

THE *certain* income of this Corporation amounts to little more than THIRTEEN HUNDRED POUNDS A YEAR ; which, with the annual subscriptions and benefactions of Governors, and the collection made at these anniversary meetings, is all that could have been prudentially relied on to discharge the annual expence ; which, the last year, arose to FOUR THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS, had you not been enabled by the charitable bequests of many deceased friends to the Hospital, and of * one, among others, whose legacy appears like *Tabor among the mountains*, to it pay off, and even extend your bounty.

* Mr. Devereux Bowley gave, among other charitable legacies, Six Thousand Pounds to this Hospital.

AND as God hath so far prospered you, we trust he will still continue you his blessing. You have seen from a few grains cast into the ground, *the blades sprung up*, and the ear on the stalk, and cannot but wish to see *the full corn in the ear* ripening unto harvest. And surely, among the number of eminent merchants and great traders of this opulent city, many, whose names have not hitherto appeared in your List of Governors, might be induced, if properly applied to; and that they have not yet contributed, may be, because not properly applied to, to become as chearful and liberal benefactors as any you have hitherto had. The charity wants their assistance, and surely it may be worth while to try your influence. You know, by happy experience, what has been done this way; and despair not of prevailing on many others to assist in this *work and labour of love*.

AND if *the mountains* can produce *peace*, *the little hills* also may bring *much righteousness* unto the people. If the great and wealthy can adorn the building with *costly stones*, and of *their abundance*, *cast in their rich gifts* unto the offerings of God, there are multitudes, who, though not in affluent, yet in easy circumstances, might give something to carry on the service of this temple of charity, which, collectively considered, would,
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like small streams issuing from different fountains, soon form themselves into *a river*, and *the river* become *a sea*.

FURTHER. As there are many in this great mart of trade, after having for years past spent their strength, and strained every sinew to get riches and accumulate wealth for themselves, families and dependants, who are now retiring from business, or at least from the hurry of it; and are wisely casting up their accounts, to see how God has prospered them in this world, that they may pass their remaining time in fitting and preparing themselves more seriously, perhaps, than till now, for that awful hour, when God shall call them to himself, where would be the harm for each of them to ask himself this question, *What shall I render unto the Lord, for all the benefits he hath done unto me?* and make some provision for the poor, whom the solicitude of business, hath caused him either quite to overlook, or but very sparingly relieve: *the hungry, the naked, the sick and the prisoner*, whom the Saviour of the world hath recommended to the care of those who by divine providence are *entrusted* with riches. The poor are nearer relations, than what the great and noble are wont to think or allow; brethren by nature, nay, brethren by blood, *for God hath made of one blood all nations of men:*
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still nearer relations by grace; the redeemed ones of Christ, children and servants of one God. A charitable legacy is not robbing a man's family of a part of what *they* think should come wholly to themselves, but a distribution of his fortune among such of their relations, as they have not been accustomed to own as kindred.

BUT here I would not be thought to say, that this, or any of our best works, can claim or merit pardon at the hand of God, much less commute for a life of sin and transgression. No. *Eternal life is the free gift of God, through the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin.* But this I do, and this I mean to say, that by thus *making to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness*, we may hope more easily to find mercy at the bar of heaven, from the mouth of that Judge, who has declared, that the tenderness we have shewn to the least, the poorest of his brethren, he will consider as done unto himself. 7 DE 65.

I SHALL conclude with the words of the Psalmist. *Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in the time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him and keep him alive, and he shall be blessed upon earth. The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, and make all his bed in his sickness.* Amen.

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